

MR PRITCHARD

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) - Patient handout for joint replacement surgery	
How much can I move my leg on the night of surgery?	<p>If you have had your hip replaced you are encouraged to gently bend your knee in the immediate post-operative period whilst your local anaesthetic is working. For your comfort you will be able to rest your operated hip with the support of a pillow.</p> <p>Your surgeon recommends that you bend your knee up and down at least twice every hour. This encourages blood flow in the area to avoid stiffness the morning following your surgery.</p> <p>If you have had your knee replaced we encourage bending your knee at least twice every hour for the first 6 hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bandages and dressings will restrict the amount of movement that can be achieved. • The morning after your surgery your nurse will assist you to sit with your legs over the edge of the bed to achieve a 90 degree bend. • The physiotherapist/nurses will help you day one and will assist you to walk with a frame or crutches and begin exercises.
How will I manage my pain?	<p>Speak to your anaesthetist at the pre- assessment appointment regarding your options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panadol or Panadol Osteo is a very good pain relief drug if taken on a regular basis. • Your doctor will also ensure that there are stronger pain relief medications available if you require. <p>Pain interferes with mobility and wound healing, it is important that your pain is controlled, (not pain free) and that you are comfortable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain relieving medication works best if taken before the pain becomes too severe and is best taken regularly. • Some pain relief medication may make you feel light headed and nauseated. <p>If this happens it is important to be careful when bending over, for example to put on your shoes or pants or emerging from a hot shower as you can be at risk of fainting.</p> <p>If these symptoms continue, consult your nurse or doctor about your pain relieving medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular ice to your wound area also helps to reduce pain and swelling. <p>Arnica Cream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists with pain caused by bruising. • Massage at least 3 times a day. • Into the whole thigh to the knee following hip replacement • From the top of the thigh, back of the knee and calf for knee replacement

<p>How do I prevent getting a blood clot post my surgery?</p>	<p>While in hospital you will have either a daily injection into the fat tissue of your abdomen called Clexane OR a 100mg aspirin tablet daily.</p> <p>You will need to take an Aspirin tablet (100mg) each day for 6 weeks following your surgery. (Please purchase this prior to your admission to hospital.)</p> <p>It is important that you inform your doctor or your nurse if you have had any issues such as inflammation of your gastrointestinal tract (stomach, abdomen) such as burning or frequent “tummy upsets” as the aspirin may make these conditions more severe.</p> <p>If you develop any gastrointestinal issues such as burning stomach pain, when you go home, discontinue taking your aspirin and follow up with your GP.</p>
<p>What happens with my dressings / wound?</p>	<p>Your dressing will be assessed daily by the nursing staff and changed as needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your wound will be glued externally with internal sutures and does not require any treatment apart from a dressing change. • It will be covered with a waterproof dressing, which will stay in place until review, (10 days after surgery) • After your shower, pat the wound dressing dry with a clean towel. <p>You will be required to return to the ward 10 days post your surgery for a wound review and to have your dressing changed. Your nurses will ensure this appointment is made on the day of discharge.</p>
<p>How much exercise should I do?</p>	<p>If your hip operation is performed early in the day the nurse will assist you to get up in the evening to have a short walk to the bathroom.</p> <p>If you have had a knee replacement you will get up for the first time the following morning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your nurse and/or physiotherapist will help you start to mobilise. • You will complete some exercises and learn to walk with a mobility aid. <p>The Nurses and the Physiotherapist will progress your exercises and monitor your movement and strength throughout your stay. It is expected that you are able to complete the exercises by yourself.</p> <p>When you are walking well, your Nurse and / or the Physiotherapist will advise when to get up and walk by yourself throughout the day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We aim for three small walks and three sets of exercises daily by the time you discharge from hospital. • We recommend you continue this daily exercise following discharge.

<p>During your first week at home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence walking outside in the garden or to the letter box. • Gradually increase your level of activity as you feel able. • Always exercise with respect to pain. <p>Your Physiotherapist will also discuss any equipment you may require on discharge.</p> <p>Not all patients require follow-up Physiotherapy after they have been discharged home from hospital.</p> <p>If you are someone who would benefit from more input, your Surgeon/Physiotherapist can make recommendations as to services available.</p>
<p>After your hip operation – It is normal to experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruising • Tender to touch • Numbness down the thigh. <p>The lateral cutaneous nerve of thigh is a skin sensation nerve and can be compressed during retraction of muscles for your operation. Nerves take 1-2 years to maximally to recover. Sometimes you may have a numb area which will not improve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hair loss (from the Anaesthetic)
<p>What happens if I become constipated?</p>	<p>There are many factors that can contribute to constipation following surgery:</p> <p>Decreased fluid intake, change in diet, diet low in fibre, pain medication, anaesthetic, decreased mobility to name a few. Constipation may delay your discharge from hospital and it will impact on your wellness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your nurse will provide you with medication to assist with your bowels commencing on day one. • The bowel regime you commenced prior to surgery should be continued in conjunction to the medication given by the nurse (eg Metamucil/ Benefibre/Movicol). <p>It is also important that you increase you fluid intake, and take advantage of menu options such as prunes, prune juice and fresh fruit to assist with your bowels.</p>
<p>How much Rest and Elevation is recommended?</p>	<p>While in hospital it is important that you rest with your leg elevated and your foot pumps on for at least 2-3 hours each afternoon.</p> <p>It is recommended that you wear your foot pumps at all times when you are in bed until you are discharged.</p> <p>We understand that most patients are reluctant to call the nurse to attach</p>

	<p>and unattach the pumps but they are recommended to decrease your risk of developing a clot in your leg and also to reduce swelling in your leg.</p> <p>When you go home it is important that you continue the rest period of 2-3 hours in the afternoon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elevate your leg on your bed with the aid of 2-3 pillows • while resting flex your foot up and down at least 10-15 times every 15 minutes.
<p>How long do I need to use my crutches for?</p>	<p>CRUTCHES are required post surgery. Please bring to hospital on the day of your surgery.</p> <p>It is important to use two crutches for two weeks post your surgery</p> <p>After two weeks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are walking normally and feel confident you can decrease to one crutch for a further two weeks. <p>You will therefore be on crutches for total of four weeks.</p> <p>It is important that you use your crutches for the full four weeks to protect the new joint while new bone is being made and healing is taking place.</p> <p>If you have had your knee replaced you can use two crutches until your six week follow up appointment.</p>
<p>How soon after my surgery can I drive?</p>	<p>This depends firstly on which leg you have had operated.</p> <p>If you have had your left hip or knee replaced and you drive an automatic car, you can drive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • once you can get in and out of the car safely • you are walking normally • pain free and ceased strong pain relief medications <p>This is usually at the 4 week mark.</p> <p>If you have had your right hip/knee replaced or you drive a manual car you cannot drive until 6 weeks post surgery.</p> <p>It is important to be safe before recommencing driving. If you need to drive sooner please discuss this with your doctor.</p>
<p>Resuming sexual activity</p>	<p>You can resume sexual activity in a passive position when you feel comfortable.</p> <p>Avoid flexing your hip past 90 degrees. You may support your operated hip with a pillow.</p>